

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence 2 May 1957

SUBJECT : High Level Meeting on Project AQUATONE

1. The Air Force has strongly recommended that the paper to be submitted by you to the President in advance of the meeting scheduled for 6 May contain no reference to RAINBOW and to any longer range plans and be narrowly limited to a brief status report and request for authority to operate over the USSR. Their reason is the desire to avoid encouraging the readers of this paper to feel that a further postponement of operations would be accepted. Subject to your approval, we have agreed to modify the paper in this manner. A copy of the revised draft is attached hereto. (Tab A)

2. We argued, however, and the Air Force agreed that the President must now be briefed on RAINBOW and that we must at this time obtain some guidance from him on our longer range plans. Accordingly, it is understood that the following topics now excluded from the formal paper will be raised by you and discussed at the meeting:

- a. Alternative Lower Priority Targets.
- b. The RAINBOW Program.
- c. Maintenance of a Non-Military Overflight Capability.
- d. Proposed Modification of Operational Concept.

3. I have therefore drafted a second paper covering these four topics which I suggest you speak from. I am making a copy of this paper as well as the formal one available to the Air Force so they will know the line you propose to take on each of these matters. This paper is also attached hereto. (Tab B)

4. I hardly need remind you that the third of these topics is the sensitive one because there is not full agreement between the Air Force and ourselves on this matter. I have drafted the paragraph on this topic with great care in an attempt to emphasize that the difference between the Air Force and ourselves is a difference in our estimate of what our own political authorities would prefer. I urge you to emphasize that our disagreement

TS-164228 ✓

Copy 6 of 6

~~TOP SECRET~~

-2-

is of this nature, since we have no desire to continue overflight operations unless we stand a better chance than the Air Force of being allowed to do them while the Air Force has no desire to stop us if they are convinced that this is the case. It follows that instead of having a debate with the Air Force about the views of the political authorities it is simpler to ask what they are.

5. I know that it is difficult to control the course of such a meeting as the one planned for the 6th but I would urge you to make a major effort at least to raise all four of these topics so that we can try to get, if not clean-cut decisions, at least some feeling for the President's views. I repeat, the Air Force is well aware that these issues will be raised.

6. I have prepared still a third piece of paper which contains a number of arguments I hope you will have an opportunity to use in favor of letting us operate.

RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.
Project Director

RMB:djm

1-

2-

3-

4-

5-Pro.Dir. Chrono

6-Proj. Chrono (Hold)